

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 PA-03

RSC-01 USIA-12 PRS-01 PM-07 NSC-10 SS-15 L-03 H-02

ACDA-19 GAC-01 MC-02 EB-11 COME-00 DOTE-00 IO-12

EUR-25 RSR-01 /148 W

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FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

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E. O. 11652: N/ A

TAGS: PFOR, IS, US

SUBJECT: US- ISRAELI RELATIONS: PRESS COMMENTARY

1. MAARIV MAY 24 PUBLISHES UNDATELINED COMMENTARY ON US-ISRAELI RELATIONS BY ITS NEW YORK CORRESPONDENT BEN. SUMMARY FOLLOWS.
2. REPORT THAT US AGENCY TAPPED ISRAELI EMBASSY WASHINGTON TELEPHONE IS UNIMPORTANT. BUT WATERGATE AFFAIR DOES RAISE IMPORTANT QUESTION FOR ISRAEL. ISRAEL MAY BE TOO CLOSELY LINKED WITH NIXON ADMINISTRATION AND SHOULD START MENDING OTHER US POLITICAL FENCES, AS ISRAEL HAS TO THINK ABOUT ITS LONGRANGE INTERESTS.
3. THIS WEEK MRS MEIR WAS ASKED ABOUT USG ATTITUDE TOWARD ISRAEL ON EVE OF BREZHNEV VISIT AND REPLIED THERE ARE NO INDICATIONS WASHINGTON WILL CHANGE ITS ATTITUDE. NEVERTHELESS, SLIGHT CLOUD HAS BEEN GATHERING ON US- ISRAELI HORIZON.
4. IT BEGAN WITH MRS MEIR'S VISIT TO WASHINGTON. TALKS SHE HAD AT PENTAGON AND STATE DEPARTMENT WERE NOT GOOD AT ALL. MANY OF QUESTIONS PUT TO HER BY THEN DEFENSE SECRETARY RICHARDSON AND BY DEPUTY SECRETARY RUSH REVEALED SERIOUS UNCLASSIFIED

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DOUBTS ABOUT CORRECTNESS AND JUSTIFICATION OF BASIC ISRAELI ASSUMPTIONS. ONE OF RESULTS IS THAT AGREEMENT ON FUTURE SUPPLY OF PHANTOMS AND SKYHAWKS HAS STILL NOT BEEN SIGNED, ALTHOUGH AMERICANS ARE SCRUPULOUSLY CARRYING OUT CURRENT CONTRACTS, WHICH WILL PARTLY EXPIRE ONLY NEXT YEAR.

5. THERE ARE THOSE AT PENTAGON WHO ADVISE US NOT TO SET UP AN AVIATION INDUSTRY OF OUR OWN AND WHO THINK WE DO NOT NEED A FEW MORE SQUADRONS OF PHANTOMS AND SKYHAWKS. " YOU ARE STRONG ENOUGH," WE ARE TOLD, AND IN WORST CASE SUPPLIES CAN ARRIVE WITHIN TWENTY FOUR HOURS." HOWEVER, USAF TURNOVER RATE IS LOW, AND SOME PEOPLE IN PENTAGON DO NOT APPRECIATE THAT CONSTANT ALERT IMPOSED ON ISRAEL BY NO WAR NO PEACE SITUATION RESULTS IN HIGHER TURNOVER RATE.

6. IT IS TRUE THAT PRESIDENT NIXON HAS MADE FAR- REACHING PROMISES, BUT THE PEOPLE IN ISRAEL WHO ARE PARTICULARLY RESPONSIBLE IN THIS MATTER, AND WHO KNOW HOW MUCH TIME PASSES BETWEEN CONTRACT SIGNING AND AIRCRAFT DELIVERIES, ARE GETTING WORRIED.

7. ONE THING IS CERTAIN: US IS HIGHLY DUBIOUS OF UK- FRENCH ATTEMPTS TO EASE EGYPTIAN DOMESTIC PRESSURES ON SADAT. BUT OBSERVERS AT UN DOUBT US WILL WANT TO PROVOKE ARAB WORLD BY USING VETO. NOW QUESTION IS WHAT EFFECT WATERGATE AFFAIR WILL HAVE ON US FOREIGN POLICY AND WHETHER PRESIDENT MAY CHANGE POSITION ON ARAB- ISRAELI PROBLEM.
ZURHELLEN

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